U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal <u>Mr. Ryan Bustle</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name <u>The High School of Saint Thomas More</u>
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>3901 N. Mattis Avenue</u>
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City <u>Champaign</u>   State <u>IL</u>   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) <u>61822-1001</u>

County <u>Champaign</u>   State School Code Number* <u>140599</u>

Telephone <u>217-352-7210</u>   Fax <u>217-352-7213</u>

Web site/URL <u>http://www.hs-stm.org</u>   E-mail <u>rbustle@hs-stm.org</u>

Twitter Handle
<u>@stthomasmorehs</u>   Facebook Page _____   Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____   Blog _____   Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date_____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* <u>Dr. Sharon Weiss</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.,   E-mail: <u>sweiss@cdop.org</u>

Other)

District Name _____   Tel. <u>NA</u>

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date_____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson <u>Dr. Larry DeBrock</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date_____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation): 0 Middle/Junior high schools
   0 High schools
   0 K-12 schools

   0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [ ] Suburban
   [X] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

3. 2 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	41	26	67
10	42	34	76
11	27	30	57
12	39	40	79
Total Students	149	130	279

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

    1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    9 % Asian
    8 % Black or African American
    4 % Hispanic or Latino
    0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    77 % White
    1 % Two or more races
    100 % Total

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 3%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	**Answer**
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	279
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.025
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
    0 Total number ELL

    Number of non-English languages represented: 0
    Specify non-English languages:

8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 9 %

    Total number students who qualify: 26

    If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.
    The High School of Saint Thomas More does not participate in the federal free and reduced price meals program. The estimate of students that are eligible comes from financial data of families applying for tuition assistance.

9.	Students receiving special education services:	2 %

	6 Total number of students served

	Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

1 Autism	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	0 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	3 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	1 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	1 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0 Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed

10.	Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

11.	Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1	15:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	95%	97%	0%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	75
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	67%
Enrolled in a community college	33%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes   No <u>X</u>

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

PART III – SUMMARY

The High School of Saint Thomas More (STM) is the 7th and newest high school of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria.Located in Champaign-Urbana, IL, STM is one of several secondary school options in the area, but the only secondary school that is based on the teachings and philosophies of the Roman Catholic Church.Opening its doors in August of 2000, this comprehensive, co-educational, four-year high school with a college preparatory emphasis has a current enrollment of 279 for the 2013-2014 academic term.

Students are admitted to The High School of Saint Thomas More without regard to race, religion, color, sex, nationality, or ethnic origin. Twenty-three percent of students are members of minority groups.Twenty-one percent are non-Catholic. Financial assistance is available to needy families that wish for their child to receive a Catholic education at STM.

As a Catholic school, all that we do is driven by our mission:
"The High School of Saint Thomas More exists to assist parents in forming students spiritually, morally, intellectually and physically in a Christ centered atmosphere of love, respect and reverence consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, sending them forth to fulfill their baptismal call as His disciples in the world."

A partnership between home and school is necessary for STM to provide students with the academic and spiritual formation necessary for them to be productive members of our American and global society.Since its inception, the greatest strength of our high school has been the dedication of the school community to do whatever is necessary to fulfill this mission.

Students at The High School of Saint Thomas More balance academic demands while remaining actively involved in extracurricular offerings.It is the norm at STM for students to dedicate their time to a wide range of athletic, musical, club and service activities.Every STM graduate completes at least 150 hours of service prior to graduation, and most students far exceed the minimum requirement.

Parents and other supporting community members at The High School of Saint Thomas More actively engage in the whole of their children's education.Parents volunteer their time, talent and treasure to the school programs.It is not uncommon to see a parent spending his morning helping to paint a set for the musical and his evening cheering in the bleachers during the basketball game.Parents also remain active in the education of their children through formal activities such as parent/teacher/student conferences and informal communication through our online grading program or email.

Supporting community members volunteer their time to school activities like our annual Veteran's Day service and to organizations such as our Board of Trustees.The support of these friends of STM during fundraising campaigns and school activities has been vital to our success.

The faculty and staff at The High School of Saint Thomas More also sacrifice their time for our students.Our teachers are challenged everyday to innovate in our classrooms.They dedicate their efforts to research best practices in order to provide excellence in instruction.They provide an example for our students to become lifelong learners.

The collaboration of our students, parents, faculty, and supporting community members is something that gains strength each year and allows us to come together to celebrate our young school's milestones, whether that is celebrating Mass together as a school community, recognizing academic excellence at our annual Academic Letter Awards night, winning a regional, sectional or state championship in athletic or academic competition, or graduating another class from STM.

Since the first commencement exercises in 2003, more than 700 students have graduated from The High School of Saint Thomas More. Ninety-nine percent of all STM graduates have attended post-secondary colleges and universities all over the nation.The remaining 1% of
STM graduates have enlisted directly in our nation's military.Over $5.5 million in merit scholarships were

awarded to students of the Class of 2013. Sixty-seven percent of this graduating class attended a four-year academic institution, and thirty-three percent attended a two-year institution. The students that attend The High School of St. Thomas More are highly successful and motivated.

In thirteen short years, The High School of Saint Thomas More has distinguished itself as a premiere secondary institution.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

a)The High School of Saint Thomas More uses the ACT series as its primary source of standardized testing data.Incoming freshmen are required to take the Explore test in the spring of 8th grade so that the guidance counselor may assist individual students in the planning of their coursework and so that the school may establish baseline data for the student and class.All high school sophomores take the PLAN test in the fall.STM does not require students to take the ACT for graduation; however, 89% of graduates over the last five years have reported taking the ACT.

This series of tests indicate that students at The High School of Saint Thomas More consistently outperform students nationwide.The Explore scores show that STM students enter well-prepared to face the rigors of our curriculum, and PLAN and ACT scores show that our curriculum prepares students to face the challenges of college-level learning.As a testament to the writing skills taught by the English department, students score an average 5.3 points above national averages on the ACT English.STM students outperform national averages on ACT Math by 3.0 points, a demonstration of the strength of our Math department.Because of the focus on reading school-wide, students score 4.0 points higher than that national average on ACT Reading.The critical-thinking skills shared by our Science department and reinforced by all departments help students score 3.3 points higher than the national average on ACT Science.

b)STM's freshman curriculum strengthens our students' academic skills in all curricular areas.As a measure of the strength of the freshman curriculum, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding college readiness benchmarks over the last 5 years on the PLAN English has increased on average 5%, Reading by 9%, and Science by 13%, compared to the same students' Explore scores.Demonstrating a similarly strong curriculum school-wide, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding college readiness benchmarks on their best ACT over the last 5 years has increased on all ACT subtests, compared to the same students' PLAN scores (2% more met benchmarks in English, 12% more in Math, 5% more in Reading and 17% more in Science).In 2013, 61% of STM students met or exceeded all four college readiness benchmarks, a marked increase from 44% the year before. For the past five years, the percentage of STM students who met all four benchmarks on the ACT is significantly above the state average:the average of the last five years is 47.4% for STM, versus 23.6% for the state.

Math scores have long been an STM concern because of the importance of math in our students' future.Five year ACT trend data shows that Math scores have remained relatively steady, with a slight decline in 2011 and 2012.The slight decline in 2011 prompted reflection within the Math department, which conducted an analysis of its curriculum through a curriculum-mapping process.As a result of this reflection and in collaboration with current and past administrators, the Math department underwent staffing changes, eliminated low-level Algebra and Geometry, created a new Consumer Math course, and revised the Calculus curriculum to prepare students for the AP test.Students who are identified as low-achieving in Math now receive remediation within the regular curriculum instead of an entirely different curriculum than their peers.In addition, one math teacher staffs an early morning academic lab where students can receive homework help.This lab is frequented by students needing help in all courses, from Algebra to Calculus.It is too early to measure the effectiveness of these measures, though the average ACT Math score increased to 25.0 in 2013 over the 23.1 average in 2012.

Over the same five year period, average Reading scores showed a 1.3 point increase from 2009 to 2010 (from 24.2 to 25.5).Since 2010, Reading scores have remained steadily high.This is due, in some part, to the consistency and focus of the faculty in the English department.The English department conducted an analysis of its curriculum through curriculum mapping.After this analysis, the English department revamped aspects of all levels of curriculum, but most specifically in the freshmen curriculum, in the emphasis on close reading skills in every course, in the implementation of summer reading assignments for all students, and in the addition of a formal vocabulary instruction in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades.However, the consistent high achievement of our students comes also because of the faculty's inclusion of reading in all curricular areas.Students complete reading assignments during whole group instruction in all departments, but are also

assigned to read independently in all curricular areas.As result of these measures, the average ACT reading score was 5.2 points above the state average and 4.5 points above the national average.

2.   Using Assessment Results:

Teachers at The High School of Saint Thomas More have long used a wide variety of assessment techniques to measure the effectiveness of their instruction.Traditional assessments (homework, essays, tests and quizzes) help teachers tailor instruction to fit the needs of the individuals in their classes, as well as re-teach and re-test, if necessary.In addition, teachers use creative assessments, portfolios and hands-on projects to allow students to demonstrate learning beyond a pen and paper.In order to foster the sharing of instructional technique and the analysis of classroom data, the administration has provided common planning time for each department, and also activities for the departments to engage in during that time.

The School Improvement Team that wrote our current improvement goals has used its time over the last two years to analyze stakeholder perception surveys and review 5 year ACT data in order to formulate those goals.The goals themselves, which focus on reading instruction and critical-thinking skills, were born out of this self-review and out of a desire to provide our students with the skills necessary to thrive in the 21st century.Prior to the formulation of these goals, which were formally announced to the faculty in the fall of 2013 and will be formally announced to our school community in the spring, faculty meetings were devoted to an overarching goal related to assessment of student learning. The 2012-2013 school year was devoted to faculty discussions of how teachers, through their professional responsibilities, can improve student learning.Faculty-wide, teachers also began an analysis of classroom assessments to ensure that grades accurately reflect student progress. To begin this analysis, the teachers read a thought-provoking article about the "problems and promise" of grade reporting in Catholic schools, created grade distributions for their individual courses, and compiled a list of questions regarding grades.These questions about assessment have driven faculty meetings this year, where teachers are focusing on student learning objectives.

Each department is also focusing on using assessment data to improve student learning.Each department has received or will receive information about standardized testing data pertinent to their department.All departments will receive information about ACT Reading scores in the spring of 2014.The departments will then use this information to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their curriculum.In addition, each department will undergo analysis of classroom assessments to determine the amount of assessment devoted to higher-order thinking skills so that the full faculty can reflect on how instruction can be adjusted to reach our school improvement goals.

3.   Sharing Lessons Learned:

The administrative team at The High School of Saint Thomas More participates in regular meetings with the Catholic partner schools in the Champaign-Urbana community and with Diocesan secondary school administrators to share and brainstorm ideas and philosophies as part of our diocesan-wide theme of "Faith in Our Future."

Department head meetings and full faculty meetings are conducted on a monthly basis.The School Improvement team also meets twice a month, and the focus of the faculty has been on continued improvement of instruction as well as on gaining and continuing national accreditation through AdvancED.Under the direction of the diocese, teachers and administrators have also worked on accreditation activities and have been selected to work with AdvancEd for on-site accreditation visits for private schools in Illinois.Our work with AdvancEd has allowed us to come into contact with successful administrators in other schools, and this contact has developed into professional partnerships that allow us to share successful strategies.The principals in our athletic conference meet regularly to share successful strategies in our schools.In addition, both the principal and assistant principal are active in the Illinois Principals' Association, and network with successful public school administrators through conferences provided through this organization.

Our newly implemented Failure Is Not an Option program, where students who do not complete homework assignments receive an office referral and the opportunity to complete that work for reduced credit after

school, is the most recent topic of discussion with these professional colleagues.This new program is designed to make sure that students take the opportunity to remediate their own mistakes and garner the benefits of homework assignments rather that simply accepting a zero.It places the responsibility for learning on the student and makes homework a priority over all extracurricular activities. This program has been shared on forums such as the Illinois Principals' Association blog and with constituents that are involved in creating and communicating our school improvement plan.

4. **Engaging Families and Community:**

We engage our families and community members on a daily basis at The High School of Saint Thomas More.Our school was founded through the hard work of community supporters and local families.Active involvement of all of our stakeholders is essential for the success of the mission of the school.
To engage school families at The High School of Saint Thomas More, teachers post lesson plans and homework assignments to RenWeb, our online grading program.In addition, grades are updated weekly so that parents can see the progress of their students.STM also sends home school announcements weekly to connect parents to the happenings of the school and to solicit volunteers for activities.In addition, the administration holds a yearly update of the state of the school that is well attended by current and prospective parents alike.

STM has three organizations that are primarily run by our families and members of the community that are involved with our school: Athletic Booster Organization (ABO), Music and Drama Boosters (MAD), and the Parents' Association.The focus of these groups is the advancement of the schools' programs and activities, both financially and organizationally. Along with members of the school administrative team, these organizations are led by an executive committee that is comprised of parents and supporters of our school. The committees, in conjunction with the school's development office, organize and execute fundraising events.These events are an opportunity for our families and community members to interact with each other, show their support for our school, and improve the overall state of their respective programs.

Several of our parents and community members serve as members of our Board of Trustees and are active participants.Our board is made up of 4 committees that each has a specific focus.Those committees are marketing, programs, finance, and building/grounds.It is important that we solicit the opinions of a variety of stakeholders in these areas as we strategically plan for the future.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The High School of Saint Thomas More is a Christ-centered environment.Our teachers and staff are highly committed to providing excellence in academics through current, sound educational practices that are consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.Our curriculum meets Diocesan and state standards, but teachers strive to teach more than "just the facts."We are focused on developing academic skills and personal habits that will help students achieve success in their endeavors beyond high school.

All courses offered by The High School of Saint Thomas More are standards-based and college-preparatory.Throughout the course of their studies, curriculum is constructed so that students will become increasingly competent in demonstrating their creativity and critical reasoning to problem solve with and without technology and in demonstrating learning across all disciplines using verbal and written language, artistic expression and empirical inquiry.Students at STM will become lifelong learners who find value in the pursuit of academic ideals.

Theology:It is the goal of the Theology program to invite students to a deeper investigation of the teachings of the Catholic faith while also assisting them in making connections between theology and other disciplines.Students are provided instruction in dogmatic theology, biblical scholarship, church history, and Catholic morality.

English:Students are challenged in reading and writing instruction at The High School of Saint Thomas More.The English department focuses on developing students' ability to think critically about the world around them by providing a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction reading. Students demonstrate this critical thinking throughout the writing intensive courses that scaffold the skills that students need in order to communicate effectively in the college and professional world.

Mathematics:The Mathematics department seeks to develop mathematical literacy in students.Through the coordinated efforts of the teachers in the Mathematics department and the focus on accuracy, math reasoning and problem-solving, students are prepared for college-level and real-world encounters with mathematics.

Science:The Science department strives to provide our students with challenging and procedure-intensive labs and activities so that they can learn science by doing.Through the varied course offerings, students learn to see the world and analyze their surroundings with a scientist's mind.
History:The Social Studies department reinforces the skills of interpretation, analysis and evaluation of historical content.Students read and analyze primary and secondary sources in their quest to think critically about the whole of human history.

Fine Arts:The Fine Arts department strives to develop skills in critical thinking, creative problem solving, engagement with the school and broader community, technology and cooperation through the classroom curriculum and supporting activities and performances.Students may select college prep courses or courses in areas of interest.Curriculum is aligned with current state and national standards in the arts and technology and, starting next year, will be developed to reflect the new Common Core Standards in the arts.

Physical Education/Health/Driver's Education:The Physical Education department provides learning that supports healthy living.Through cardiovascular activity, weight-lifting, and exposure to a variety of sports, students in P.E. develop physically.Students in Health learn about healthy choices and nutrition, while Driver's Education provides hands-on instruction to provide students with the tools to drive safely.

World Languages:The World Languages department currently offers Spanish and Latin to our students.The Spanish department targets instruction to provide for student success in reading, speaking, writing and listening to Spanish.Those core areas provide the basis for all assessment in the Spanish classrooms.Spanish instruction exposes students to cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.The High School of Saint Thomas

More is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements.Our Latin curriculum exposes students to the roots of romance languages.Latin emphasizes the connection between the Roman culture and Western Civilization.In addition, students in Latin learn root words that support vocabulary instruction in other departments, particularly science and English.

2. Reading/English:

b.The High School of Saint Thomas More has high expectations for reading and writing performance, and the English department is specifically tasked with this instruction.

The English department focuses on reading a variety of texts, including short stories, poems, plays, novels and non-fiction, such as narrative, argumentative, and informational texts.STM increases text rigor by emphasizing complexity.Complexity is determined using quantitative measures, such as Lexile scoring, and qualitative measures, including using texts with various levels of meaning and purpose.Text complexities are differentiated by using a range of difficult texts.Students reading below grade level are given remedial reading and challenged to read at grade level.Students reading above grade level are also challenged with texts that are more complex.

Close reading is used in all English courses. Students are challenged to exhibit comprehension through text-dependent questions.Questions are presented at a general level, including questions about key details and vocabulary and text structure, and athigher levels, through challenging students to think about author purpose and make inferences about the text.Students are challenged to make intertextual connections and form their own opinions and arguments about a text.This layered approach to reading ensures that students exhibit basic reading comprehension skills in addition to more complex thinking about a text.

As an extension of the reading curriculum, an emphasis is put on writing instruction.Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences.Each English course requires writing a research paper in which students perform independent research and give proper citations for sources.Students independently analyze literature in major essays and employ creative writing techniques.Proper usage and mechanics and vocabulary development are emphasized throughout the writing process.A special consideration is given to writing for a specific audience, especially at the senior level.

To increase rigor in the English department course offerings, the Advanced Placement program is open to all junior and senior students.Both Advanced Placement English Literature and English Language courses are offered, and all students are invited to challenge themselves through Advanced Placement courses.

3. Mathematics:

The High School of Saint Thomas More offers a traditional math sequence of Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2 that is designed to prepare students for encounters with math outside of the school curriculum.Based on their Explore scores, some students place directly into Geometry, though many freshmen and their parents choose to solidify their Algebra skills that they received in middle school with an additional year of Algebra.After this sequence of courses, students may opt to take Precalculus and then Calculus, Statistics, or Consumer Math.The Math department chooses to instruct with the idea that all students can be successful in math with the right methods and tools.

Students cannot use calculators inside the Algebra 1 classroom.Tests and quizzes are carefully designed so that students do not need calculators, but do need the basic math facts (adding/subtracting positive and negative numbers, multiplication and division facts, multiplying/dividing positive and negative numbers) in order to successfully solve problems.This method is met with groans from students initially, but because it does support an increased rate of success in math computation on timed assessments on basic facts, teachers, students and parents alike report satisfaction with the policy.

Teachers in the Math department make liberal use of technology to support instruction of all students.Interactive projectors, Geometry software and 3D manipulatives are used on all levels.

For STM students who struggle on math assignments or math assessments, teachers provide individualized support using a number of strategies.First and foremost, students can come to see any math teacher for help in the morning or after school.There is a teacher formally available from 7:00 to the start of the day and then from the end of the day until at least 3:30.If students are not seeking help on their own, they may be referred to the office through the Failure is Not an Option policy, which means that the student is required to stay for help.In addition, the Math department has used ALEKS for remediation for students struggling in Algebra or Geometry.

4. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Theology:
The Theology department of the High School of Saint Thomas More is essential to the school's mission of forming young men and women in the Catholic faith.In addition to direct instruction, the theology curriculum is also integrated into the school's holistic vision of nurturing all aspects of our learners.Thus, Theology teachers are always seeking to make connections in their classes with the other disciplines of the school.For example, our students are required to read and analyze excerpts from classical texts such as the Bible, the Church Fathers, and other authors of enduring quality that are significant for not only young Catholic men and women, but also for any serious student of Western Civilization.Students explore the Catholic faith through this analysis of text as well as through deep discussion of Catholic Morality and Church teaching.Moreover, students must synthesize their learning and create new products such as essays and presentations that communicate their learning to others and adhere to STM's rigorous academic standards.

Student learning is further integrated into the students' lives by periods in the school chapel where students pray and meditate upon their classroom learning and its implications for their lives.Students in all levels of Theology participate in curriculum-enhancing field trips, such as visiting area churches to study the architecture and decoration of different Christian denominations or attending Mass in the Cathedral of the Diocese.Each year, students also participate in a retreat to engage in prayerful reflection and fellowship with their classmates.

The teachers in the Theology department at STM help to coordinate campus ministry activities for the broader school community.These activities, whether they are special retreats, fundraisers for our sister school in Tanzania or service opportunities, help our students to live out their Catholic faith.Students connect their classroom learning to the outside world through these service projects.

5. **Instructional Methods:**

The High School of Saint Thomas More believes that homework is invaluable to student learning.Teachers are mindful that homework should be authentic, providing students the opportunity to practice content for future assessments and to reinforce academic skills.The Failure is Not an Option program increases student learning by ensuring all students complete all academic requirements.Students who do not complete homework assignments are assigned to an academic study hall.Rather than allow students to accept a zero for the assignment, this program stresses the importance of homework for student learning.

Teachers offer modified assessments.For example, the Geometry class assesses content vocabulary on the first day of assessment and application of learning objectives on the second day.Breaking an assessment into multiple stages has proven to be an effective modification for STM's diverse student body.Teachers also remediate and reassess students.Remediation and reassessment is offered at the individual level in all content areas, but it also may be offered for an entire class if deemed necessary.In English courses, students are offered the option to revise all written work, and teachers sometimes require revisions of all students.

Students with documented disabilities are enrolled in the Academic Success program.Students are given accommodations, including extended time, assessments read out loud, assessment in an atmosphere with fewer distraction, and adapted assessments.These students are also assigned a study hall with a resource teacher, who provides supplementary instruction for students.

Technology is used to support instruction in all classrooms.Personal computing devices are welcome in the classroom.Each teacher uses RenWeb as an online gradebook and to make instructional materials available to students.Lesson plans and homework assignments are posted on students' RenWeb accounts.This allows students to access outlines of class content, notes from class, and all homework assignments.All classrooms are equipped with projectors, and half of the classrooms are equipped with interactive projectors, including all Math, Science, and English classrooms.Departments use computer programs and websites to provide supplementary materials to students.For example, the English department uses an online vocabulary system that allows students to complete practice exercises and assessments.Many students use the system's app on their personal devices to prepare for assessments.STM also uses Turnitin.com for writing submissions.In addition to providing immediate feedback to students about originality in their writing, Turnitin also enables teachers to provide fast, rich feedback to students.

6. Professional Development:

The leadership of The High School of Saint Thomas More understands the importance of professional development to the general success of a school.The dedication to self-improvement from our teaching and administrative staff has been a key factor in the overall success of our students in the classroom.In addition to the Title funding that the school receives from the public school district, the yearly budget also reflects opportunities for faculty and staff to grow in their profession by attending seminars, conferences, and securing classroom materials.In order to support professional development efforts, recent fundraisers have included a "raise the paddle" for our donors to pledge money specifically earmarked for the purpose of providing the training necessary to implement two additional Advanced Placement courses, AP Biology and AP Calculus.Because budgets are always tight, teachers often show their dedication to professional growth by sacrificing their personal money to attend to their classroom development. Our Diocese has also offered numerous professional development opportunities for our teaching and administrative staff, both religiously-based and tied to the transition to the Common Core standards in our subject areas.

Creating a culture of lifelong learning is the driving effort behind all professional development at STM.Faculty-wide professional development is carefully designed to improve the learning of our students.As part of our school improvement plan, teachers have engaged in ongoing reflection on and analysis of valid and reliable assessment and instructional methodology that supports student success in reading and critical-thinking.

Professional development is a shared responsibility at The High School of Saint Thomas More.Teachers are provided numerous opportunities to share their professional growth with each other and with the administration.Teachers here engage in constant dialog about how to best serve our students' needs.As a result, the skills of those who interact with students on a daily basis are cultivated, and our students benefit.

7. School Leadership

The leadership style of the administration at The High School of Saint Thomas More is collaborative.The collaborative effort put forth by the administration reflects the collaborative interactions of the students and staff as a whole.The principal, assistant principal, and chaplain use the mission of the school as the driving force behind decisions made and policies created.

The chaplain is a Diocesan priest who serves as the spiritual leadership of the school.He spearheads all campus ministry efforts and seeks guidance from multiple stakeholders in order to focus on the school's Catholic identity.He leads the faculty and administration to provide excellence in the spiritual and moral development of the student body.

Both the principal and assistant principal have Master's degrees in Educational Administration and are educated on best practices in schools.Both administrators have dedicated their careers to being educational leaders in Catholic schools.They have used their knowledge and leadership skills to mentor and guide the faculty and staff at STM to be mission-driven and to seek out ways to improve the teaching and learning process in their classrooms through consistent collaboration with their colleagues.

The main objective of the administrative team at STM is to instill a sense of community.The administrative team regularly provides opportunities for stakeholders to assist in the research of matters that have a significant impact on the school community.Committees focused on policies and practices such as the dress code, campus ministry, and crisis management include multiple voices to solicit varied feedback before decisions are made.The school improvement team, under the leadership of the principal and the assistant principal, spent time collecting data to inform improvement goals in the areas of reading and critical-thinking.This team will continue to monitor progress towards these goals, guided by the administration.The principal and assistant principal lay the ground work for collaboration as they continue to build towards the success of the overall mission of the school.

PART VI - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from non-public schools as noted below.

1. Non-public school association(s):   Catholic

   Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?   Yes <u>X</u>   No

3. What are the 2013-2014 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

2013-2014 Tuition

Grade	Amount
K	$0
1	$0
2	$0
3	$0
4	$0
5	$0
6	$0
7	$0
8	$0
9	$6910
10	$6910
11	$6910
12	$6910

4. What is the educational cost per student? $<u>10714</u>
   (School budget divided by enrollment)

5. What is the average financial aid per student? $<u>4564</u>

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to   <u>40</u>%
   scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?

7. What percentage of the student body receives
   scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?   <u>96</u>%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math	**Test:** ACT
Grade: 12	**Edition/Publication Year:** 2013
Publisher: College Board	**Scores are reported here as:** NCEs

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	25	23	23	24	24
Number of students tested	69	73	85	71	76
Percent of total students tested	92	92	89	80	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Other 1					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. Other 2					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Other 3					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Students took the Math portion of the ACT over multiple months with January being used as the default testing month. Reported average scores are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Subject: Reading/ELA	**Test:** ACT
Grade: 12	**Edition/Publication Year:** 2013
Publisher: College Board	**Scores are reported here as:** NCEs

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	26	25	26	26	24
Number of students tested	69	73	85	71	76
Percent of total students tested	92	92	89	80	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Other 1					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. Other 2					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Other 3					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Students took the Reading/ELA portion of the ACT over multiple months with January being used as the default testing month. Reported average scores are rounded to the nearest whole number.